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SENIOR CITIZEN NEWS



LET OLDER AMERICANS BE OF SERVICE



Dedicated to the Educational, Economic and Social Betterment of Older Montanans

Volume I

January, 1971

Number 11

Senior Centers Get New Look

Legal Services Available For Poor Senior Citizens

Helena—Legal help is available throughout the state for elderly persons who have no funds through the co-operation of two federal agencies and the Montana Bar Association. Montana Legal Services created by the bar association functions in all counties except five in the Flathead area which is served by Judicare.

Thomas Mahan, attorney for the State Welfare Board, explained that the Office of Economic Opportunity plan to get legal aid for the poor operated in the seven Indian reservations and the larger towns. The Department of Health Education and Welfare expanded the service to provide for a second year of funding for a state wide plan in the amount of \$216,000.

Montana Legal Services

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Kalispell—Clyde Hunter blows the "slush pump" to herald in the 1971 White House Conference year. Mr. Hunter is a member of the Flathead Senior Citizen Center and is the trombonist for a little German band in that area.

Mr. Hunter, when asked by the Kalispell Daily Inter Lake correspondent Warren E. Pettit to compare today's

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Directors Hear Experts at Billings Meet

Rapid expansion of recreational, educational, social and work programs in Montana's 20 senior citizen centers was predicted by Barclay Craighead, Chairman of the Montana Commission on Aging.

Mr. Craighead based his forecast on accomplishments of a senior center staff work-

PHOTOS ON PAGE SIX

shop January 4-5 at the Northern Hotel in Billings.

Several experts outlined plans for center development during the workshop sessions.

Doctor Melvin A. White, Salt Lake City, director of the Utah Division on Aging, outlined a number of programs which have proved successful in his

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MONTANA SENIOR CITIZEN CENTERS

Walter Zimmerman, Director
Recreation Department-City of Billings
Senior Citizens Multi-Purpose Center
13 North 29th Street
Billings, Montana 59101

James Todd, Director
Great Falls Senior Citizens Center
318 Central Avenue
Great Falls, Montana 59401

W. E. "Bill" Sherman
Kathleen Walford Senior Citizens Center
424 Higgins Avenue
Missoula, Montana 59801

Earle J. Tucker, Director
Helena Senior Centers
1421 Roberts Street—21 North Main Street
Helena, Montana 59601

Marie Bradley, Director
Butte Silver Bow Senior Activity Center
405 West Park Street
Butte, Montana 59034

Frank Bolton, Director
Flathead Senior Citizens Center
Main and First Streets
Kalispell, Montana 59901

Dan Lopp, Deputy Director
Mineral County Senior Citizens Centers
Alberton Montana
Superior Montana
St. Regis Montana
508 Toole
Missoula Montana 59801

Senior Citizens Center
V.F.W. Hall
Townsend, Montana 59644

Mrs. Sallie M. Brutto Coordinator
The Senior Center of Hamilton
O'Hara House
109 South Fourth Street
Hamilton Montana 59840

Jean Foster, Manager
Park County Senior Citizens Center
206 South Main
Livingston Montana 59047

Hugh Simanton Director
Malta Senior Citizens Center
206 South Second Avenue East
Malta Montana 59538

Kenneth K. Baldwin, Director
Bozeman Senior Social Center Incorporated
37 East Main
Bozeman Montana 59715

Mrs. Edna Walker, Director
Big Horn County Senior Citizens Association
518 Center Avenue
Hardin Montana 59034

Allen Darnall, President
Sidney Senior Citizens Center
101 3 South East
Sidney, Montana 59270

Grace E. Henderson, Director
Libby Senior Citizens Association
Moose Hall—California Ave.
Libby, Mt. 59923

Director's Report

by Lyle Downing



Professor Douglas J. Stewart, a profound thinker from Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, believes that all Americans at retirement or age 70, which ever is earlier, should lose their vote. Stewart, who is billed as an associate professor of classics at Brandeis and a visiting professor at the University of California, San Diego, advocated disenfranchising senior citizens in an article which appeared recently in *The New Republic*.

The *New Republic* quotes the professor as follows:

"I would advocate that all persons lose their vote at retirement or age 70, which ever is earlier, and most important, as the lesson of California teaches, anyone who immigrates to another state after age 55 should lose the vote forthwith. Such persons move, not to contribute to their new community, but to extract its advantages. This they may do, but they must not be allowed the additional privilege

of helping upset existing political forces and undoing social and cultural arrangements arrived at by long-term residents who have invested youth, work, taxes, and imagination in their communities. Above all, they must not be permitted to help political mountebanks confiscate other people's futures."

Professor Stewart also made some dire predictions about the future of California.

"California faces civil war," he declared, "if we continue to allow the old an unlimited franchise. There are simply too many senile voters, and the number is growing. The vote should not be a privilege in perpetuity guaranteed by minimal physical survival, but a share in the continuing fate of the political community both in its benefits and risks."

"The old having no future," he continued, "are dangerously free from the consequences of their own political acts. It makes no sense to allow the vote to someone who is actuarially unlikely to survive and pay the bills for the politicians or party he may help elect."

The learned savant had much more to say about the inability of elderly citizens to intelligently cast ballots. It is

Clarence Hunt, President
Thirty-nine Plus Club—Gold Thimble
12 Main
Roundup, Montana 59072

Ted Halvorson, President
Senior Citizen Center of Teton Co.
202 Fourth Avenue N.E.
Choteau, Montana 59422

Herbert Carlson
Deer Lodge County Senior Citizens
210 East 5th
Anaconda, Montana 59711

Director's Report

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the opinion of this writer that there may be quite a few senile persons who are still voting. We would venture to say that there also are some kooky professors around some of our college campuses who should be disenfranchised if this drastic action is taken against the senior citizen population as a whole.

We do not believe that Professor Stewart's views reflect the attitude at Brandeis University. A few years ago we had an opportunity to spend a week on the campus of Brandeis attending a gerontological workshop. It was a very rewarding experience.

At that time we became acquainted with many members of the Brandeis faculty. The university has one of the top schools of social work in the United States, and great emphasis in this branch of education is placed on bettering the lot of older Americans.

Perhaps Professor Stewart is so flippant in his attitude to-

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music with his kind, said: "There haven't been any top musicians on the scene for years. I'm from the big band era when they played good music. Today they've got long hair, gimmicks and no lyrics—the rock of today is nothing but amplified noise."

Mr. Hunter performed in every state of the nation—except Alaska, Hawaii and Vermont—with the Ted Weems orchestra and on the radio—"Out of the night comes the music of Ted Weems."

In 1935 Hunter found himself with a "Lombardo type" band playing at a resort in

ward older persons because he has found a "fountain of youth." If not, perhaps when old age creeps up on him, he will change his mind about the rights of senior citizens to vote.

On the other hand, as one of our staff members commented after reading Professor Stewart's article: "It's really funny what some people will say to get a little publicity."

Iron River, Mich., where the band played for dinner and dancing every night and helped the boss pick chickens Saturday afternoon for the evening dinner, for pay of \$17 a week.

Mr. Hunter played with bands featuring such stars as Ilka Chase and Chico Marx. The next step in his career was Hollywood and the movies. As a "sideline" musician—he didn't play but just appeared as a band member—he had parts in dozens of movies whose stars included James Cagney, Betty Hutton, Jack Benny and Perry Como. Among the movies were Yankee Doodle Dandy, Shores of Tripoli and Wilson.

Mr. Hunter then moved up to bigger bands including Al Donahue and Tommy Tucker before joining Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys—the biggest Western band in the country at the time.

Mr. Hunter is now retired from the big names of Hollywood and is enjoying the smog free Big Sky in Kalispell.



Bozeman's Hillcrest was given the 1963 award of merit in architectural design by the Federal Housing Administra-

tion. Through the Bozeman Deaconess Foundation Hillcrest is operated like a resort hotel or club apartment house

—it offers a large variety of apartments ranging from the economy size to the deluxe.

There are 120 units.

LEGAL SERVICES

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maintains staffed offices and "circuit rider" attorneys who operate in two county areas.

Judicare pays any attorney in its area 80 per cent of the fees established by the bar association. A co-ordinator is being hired to expedite the legal work being performed in the Flathead country.

To continue these tax-saving services the Legislature will be asked for an appropriation of \$60,000.

Mr. Mahan cited an example of how these services save money. A woman with dependent children is on the Welfare rolls because of a missing husband—she has fallen in love with another gentleman. Legal Services gets her divorce for her and a new self-sufficient family is formed saving the state and nation's tax dollars.

Legal Services finds that it has lots of activity and is able to settle 95 per cent of the cases without filing in court. A good portion of the work is helping the children and grandchildren of Seniors. Then there are matters of getting Social Security and other pension plans straightened out—rental evictions and seeing that fair hearings are arranged with the Welfare Department.

One case involved the repossession of a car from the mother of a serviceman.

Protection from claims against real estate is another service.

At present Legal Services

NEW LOOK

Continued from page one

state that could be activated in Montana.

"Centers throughout the United States currently are serving only a minority of older persons," Doctor White declared. "Unfortunately, centers are serving for the most part people who are in least need of the services. There are very few centers that can serve all class levels. The potential for the center to serve older people is limited by the vision of the director."

The Utah aging expert pointed out that most centers start with a program of "fun and games" and this is only one facet of services needed by Older Americans.

"The fun and games concept creates problems," he said. "For instance, how do you get the individuals to attend? How do you induce persons who are not interested in activities to participate? In Utah the best answer we have found is to de-centralize programs. In some communities we are using school buildings for satellite operations."

"There is no reason," he continued, "why schools which usually close at 4 p.m. cannot be kept open for the use of older people. Churches as well fit into this category."

According to Doctor White one of the most urgent needs of most centers is to develop

does not handle bankruptcy or estate matters. Montana judges provide attorneys in criminal cases.

programs for men. He added that most of the center programs available now are of interest primarily to women.

"Throughout Utah," he said, "camping and other outdoor activities have proved very popular with men as well as women. The scope of center activity is almost unlimited. A center can become a focal point for health, education, employment and many other programs."

Other workshop speakers included Clinton Hess, Denver, Colo., associate regional commissioner for the Administration on Aging. Mr. Hess spoke on the subject: "A Better World for All of Us—a Federal-State-Community Responsibility."

Robert Utzinger, Salt Lake City, Regional Representative of the American Association of Retired Persons, discussed "Private Agencies and the Senior Center."

John Haugan, planning specialist for the Commission on Aging, gave a progress report on the 1971 White House Conference on Aging. This conference will be held in Washington, D. C., next November.

One of the highlights at Billings was the senior center directors' banquet at the Northern. Colin Raff, vice-president of the Montana Power Company and a member of the state commission, acted as toastmaster.

The principal talk was made by Doctor James Hall, co-ordinator of continuing ed-

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NEW LOOK

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education at the University of Montana. Doctor Hall said that the "fun and games" activities were fine, but to be really effective, senior centers must go far beyond that.

Addressing himself to the 55 center directors and their aides, the university professor said:

"Let yourselves be heard. You are not a doddering group of welfare people. These centers eventually must be put on a self-sustaining basis. I believe this can be done with the help of the communities in which the centers are located. I understand a measure is now pending in the State Legislature for a small mill levy to sustain the centers. You have paid your share of taxes and now you should reap some sort of a harvest."

In advising Senior Citizens on remaining involved in community activities he suggested that they offer their services and knowledge to the community and its institutions.

Doctor William G. Ensign, a Billings internist and a member of the State Commission on Aging, made a few closing remarks.

"At the time of my appointment three years ago to the Commission I thought it would turn out to be just another Montana watermelon," he said. "I thought it would be typical of social programs that have originated with government funds and when the funds were gone everybody lost interest in the project. The

Helena—A bill permitting cities or counties to levy a mill on property to support Senior Citizen Centers has been introduced in the House of Representatives. Sponsors of the bill include House Minority Leader William Christiansen, D-Helena; Chase Patrick, R-Helena; Robert Dye, R-Bozeman, and Gorham Swanberg, D-Great Falls.

LOCAL SUPPORT

Sufficient local support has been obtained in three Colorado towns to continue the operation of their senior centers when funding under Title III of the Older Americans Act ends. Canon City Senior Citizens Center, Colorado Springs Senior Citizen and Greeley Senior Citizens Center have become a permanent part of the local communities effort on behalf of their elderly people.

aging program in Montana is one that has gained supporters despite cutbacks in funding. This is a case where the vine may have died, but the watermelon is still living."

The Billings workshop was arranged by Lyle Downing, Commission on Aging Executive Director.

The center directors were welcomed to the Magic City by Mr. Craighead, commission chairman, who urged the center directors to seek support from their area senators and representatives for aging legislation now pending.

JOBS FOR SENIORS

Senior jobhunting is one of the primary functions of the employment service. Providing job placement service is often insufficient, many older workers who have been displaced by modern technology require training in new occupational fields. Plans are for increased emphasis on training, and upgrading occupational skills of older workers during 1971.

Jess Fletcher, director of the Montana Employment Service, said that in comparing employment information for the month of November with the same period one year ago, total new registrations for employment rose from 4,621 in November of 1969 to 5,764 in November of 1970 for a 24 per cent increase.

Job opportunities declined sharply in November. One year ago placements for the month totaled 2,826 for all age groups compared to 1,639 for the same period in 1970, a 42 per cent decline. A corresponding decline was noted in older worker job placements.

The total number of job seekers registered in the 23 local state employment offices increased from 10,770 one year ago, to 19,716 as of November 30, 1970, up 74 per cent. Older workers continued to fare better than their younger counterparts. Total registrations for the age 45 and over group rose from 2,546 one year ago to 3,918 on November 30, 1970, up 54 per cent compared to 74 per cent for younger job seekers.

BILLINGS TRAINING SESSION FOR DIRECTORS VIEWED CANDIDLY



Utah's Dr. Mel White



Jane Lynde, Walter Zimmerman and Anita Bahm, Billings



Mr. and Mrs.
Willard Thompson,
Missoula



Variety Swingers brighten
the banquet at the
Northern Hotel.



Frank Bolton, Kalispell,
(right) questions Dr. White



Mrs. Almer Thorson and
Mrs. Daniel Lebsack, Livingston.



Mrs. DeLores Skoog, Superior

Outdoor Recreation For Montana's Senior Citizens

by Bob Cooney
Recreation and Parks Division
State Fish and Game Department

Love for the out of doors surely does not wane with the years. The natural beauty of Montana is of as much interest and joy to the elderly as it was any time during their lives. Recreation out of doors is therefore of prime importance to the majority of the senior citizens of the state.

Outdoor recreation is briefly the use of the out of doors for enjoyment and wellbeing. To fully enjoy the out of doors it must be used in some way. These ways can vary greatly from quietly looking out across a lovely, tranquil scene to the participation in some form of activity out of doors. And the why of outdoor recreation is surely self-evident as it must be for pleasure that involves health and well-being. This then is the very essence of outdoor recreation as it affects the lives of all.

To many, including those who work constantly with planning and the development of outdoor recreation facilities must come many questions. Are they actually providing the type of outdoor recreation opportunities that are needed and will be enjoyed by people of all ages?

Yes. Many of the recreational facilities found in city and state parks as well as in our great national parks and forest areas are equally enjoyed by people of all ages. But there are some special provisions for older people and fortunately in many cases

they are being met.

Ramps and more gentle grades are being substituted for the steep series of steps so common in some of the parks of the past. Handy railings are becoming standard features in today's recreational facilities and are found along the edge of many pleasant, scenic paths. Doors and ramps of a size to accommodate wheel chairs are more common. Several short but interesting nature trails are being established.

There are many more things that are being done in parks within and outside of the cities that are of special interest to older people. Some of these have been a part of Montana's park program for a number of years. Others are relatively new.

Several of these could be grouped under the heading of "comfort out-of-doors." These consist of well built and convenient benches and tables so located as to take advantage of sunshine and shade. Picnic shelters are more commonly found. Windbreaks of shrubs or trees and in some cases tastefully constructed fences make outdoor experiences especially pleasant.

Facilities for games such as horseshoe pits and shuffleboard courts add much to the fun and sociability of groups of older people.

Opportunities to enjoy flower gardens even to the point of joining in their daily care can add much to enjoyment of city parks. Special provi-

SENIOR CITIZEN POWER

Governor Nelson Rockefeller in launching New York State's program of participation in the 1971 White House Conference on Aging at a Hunter College Forum on the White House Conference the governor said:

"I believe in senior citizen power—I have seen it work. Our older citizens are among the most valuable human resources we have. Many are still at work—in government, in volunteer activities, and in commerce and industry. You do a great work because you have the wisdom and experience to get the job done right. There is no substitute for that."

sions that attract birds and small animals add much to the pleasure of park visitors particularly those with time to thoroughly enjoy them.

This then has been a little ramble through bits of Montana's beautiful out of doors with thoughts particularly of the recreational needs of older people. It has been found that in general these needs differ but little from those of other ages. It is most evident, however, that they do need and should have an interesting and comfortable outdoor environment to be used in many ways for the fun and zest of living.

Community Conferences Planned for Eight Towns

Grassroots response to the Older Americans White House Forums, held for Senior Citizens across the country, has been "overwhelming," according to John B. Martin, Special Assistant to the President on the Aging and Director of the 1971 White House Conference on Aging.

Mr. Martin said that first reports from nearly 6,000 community forums held so far reveal a high interest among older Americans about being involved in the solution of their own problems.

"We've heard that older people spoke up loud and clear, often aggressively, about problems relating to income, health and transportation," he said.

According to John Haugan, planner for the Montana Commission on Aging, the next phase in the state plans for the White House Conference on Aging is the setting up of community conferences. There will be eight community conferences to be held in Helena,

Great Falls, Butte, Missoula, Havre, Bozeman, Billings, and Glendive. A co-ordinator and steering group will be set up in each city to help select a chairman for nine "needs" committees to be formed. In some of the smaller communities there might be one or two committees formed for the most vital needs of that community.

Each of the Montana state agencies (Health, Employment, Nutrition, etc.) have been contacted, and all organizations which work with senior citizens are being encouraged to participate in these committees.

The goal is a more realistic and comprehensive national policy toward older Americans. Throughout 1971, all citizens, aging experts, national organizations interested in older people and government officials at all levels will be able to continue the dialogue with the not-so-silent generation.

SENIOR CITIZEN NEWS



LET OLDER AMERICANS BE OF SERVICE



**Dedicated to Montana's 70,000
older Americans**

Montana Commission on Aging
715 Fee Street

Helena, Montana 59601

Forrest H. Anderson
Governor of Montana

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